

WIGSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTHfor the year 1944.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my sixth annual report on the health of your district.

With the termination of hostilities in Europe the restrictions governing the publication of certain statistical information have now been removed, and this report is therefore of a more detailed nature than has been the case during the last four years.

In an area the size of Wigston a word of warning is necessary regarding the interpretation of the various birth and death rates. These are based upon very small numbers, and in many cases slight variations in the original numbers would make a large difference in the corresponding rate. Thus an additional puerperal death would raise the maternal mortality rate by 3.05. Though the rates are useful in comparing the vital statistics of Wigston with those of other areas, they should always be considered in conjunction with the actual numbers upon which they are based.

The death rate is substantially the same as that for the whole of England and Wales; the birth rate, however, is considerably higher. Thus the birth rate of 23.7 compares with 17.6 for the whole of England and Wales, and indicates that Wigston had 71 more births than would have occurred had the national rate prevailed in the district. The excess is not due to evacuation, as the registrations of all births are referred to the area of the mothers' usual residence.

An infant mortality rate of 36 indicates a very marked improvement, and the number of infant deaths is for the first time during the war below the expected level. The maternal mortality rates are based upon numbers which are far too small to justify dogmatic assertions. The additional deaths may be due to chance variations, yet the fact that the numbers are above normal must not be forgotten.

Considerable attention has been paid to the social conditions of the district, and during the year the evacuation scheme produced many problems. Most of the evacuees entering the Wigston area were either mothers with young children or entire families, and the problems of accommodation were accordingly more difficult. Overcrowding, and in some cases gross overcrowding, was unavoidable, and when these conditions are taken into account it must be agreed that the general health of the district has been satisfactory.

In conclusion I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Chairman and members of the Committee and the officers and staff of the Council for their willing support during the year.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant

ALEC. E. MARTIN. M.D., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.

S T A T I S T I C A L S U M M A R Y .

<u>Area (in acres)</u>		3,447
<u>Population.</u>	1944 Registrar General's estimate.....	13,290
	1943 " " " "	13,110
	1939 " " " "	12,960
	1931 Census (adjusted for changes in boundary).....	10,905
<u>Number of inhabited houses.</u> (end of 1944), according to rate books.....		4,200
<u>Rateable Value,</u> 1st. April, 1944.....		£65,548
<u>Sum represented by a penny rate</u>		£250

BIRTHS.

		1939	1943	1944
<u>Live Births.</u>	<u>Legitimate</u>			
	Male	112	142	151
	Female	109	128	147
	Total	221	270	298
	<u>Illegitimate</u>			
	Male	4	11	12
	Female	4	6	5
	Total	8	17	17
	<u>Total live births</u>			
	Male	116	153	163
	Female	113	134	152
	Total	229	287	315
<u>Stillbirths.</u>	<u>Legitimate</u>			
	Male	6	3	5
	Female	2	7	7
	Total	8	10	12
	<u>Illegitimate</u>			
	Male	Nil	2	1
	Female	Nil	1	2
	Total	Nil	3	3
	<u>Total stillbirths</u>			
	Male	6	5	6
	Female	2	8	9
	Total	8	13	15
<u>Birthrate per 1,000</u> estimated population.....	Wigston	17.7	21.9	23.7
	England and Wales	15.0	16.5	17.6
<u>Illegitimate birthrate</u> per 1,000 live births....	Wigston	34.9	59.2	53.9
<u>Stillbirths.</u> Rate per 1,000 live and still births		33.3	43.3	45.5
<u>Stillbirths.</u> Rate per 1,000 estimated population.....	Wigston	0.62	0.99	1.13
	England and Wales	0.59	0.51	0.50

DEATHS.

<u>Total number of Deaths</u>	Male	80	88	87
	Female	62	86	73
	Total	142	174	160
<u>Death rate per 1,000</u> estimated population.....	Wigston	10.9	13.3	12.0
	England and Wales	12.1	12.1	11.6
<u>Death rate (corrected)</u>		11.1	Not available	

Deaths from puerperal causes.		1939	1943	1944.
No. of deaths.	Puerperal sepsis.....	Nil	Nil	Nil
	Other puerperal causes.....	2	2	2
Rate per 1,000 live and still births.....	Wigston	8.5	6.6	6.1
	England and Wales	2.82	2.29	1.93

<u>Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age.</u>					
No. of Deaths.	Legitimate.....	Male	8	9	4
		Female	4	5	6
		Total	12	14	10
	Illegitimate.....	Male	2	3	2
		Female	-	1	-
		Total	2	4	2
	Total Infant deaths.....		14	18	12
Infant mortality per 1,000 live births.....	Wigston		61	63	38
	England and Wales		50	49	46

Total Deaths, classified according to age and sex.							
Age Group.		1939.		1943		1944.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year of age.....		8	4	12	6	6	6
Over 1 year and under 5 years.....		-	1	1	2	1	1
" 5 years " " 10 "		2	1	-	-	1	1
" 10 " " " 15 "		-	-	-	3	2	1
" 15 " " " 25 "		3	2	3	3	-	4
" 25 " " " 35 "		4	1	1	4	1	1
" 35 " " " 45 "		9	2	5	4	1	3
" 45 " " " 55 "		7	3	5	8	10	5
" 55 " " " 65 "		11	12	14	10	16	5
" 65 " " " 75 "		18	15	27	21	18	23
" 75 " " " 85 "		15	18	13	17	26	18
Over 85 years.....		3	3	7	8	5	5
Total.....		80	62	88	86	87	73

Causes of Death.	1939			1943			1944		
	M.	F.	Total	M.	F.	Total	M.	F.	Total
Heart disease.....	19	16	35	17	16	33	16	16	32
Cancer.....	6	8	14	14	16	30	14	13	27
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	4	7	11	8	10	18	11	11	22
Bronchitis.....	6	3	9	4	4	8	7	3	10
Congenital causes.....	7	2	9	8	4	12	4	3	7
Nephritis.....	2	1	3	1	1	2	5	2	7
Diabetes.....	1	1	2	1	2	3	3	3	6
Other digestive diseases.....	-	2	2	4	3	7	2	2	4
Tuberculosis (respiratory)....	5	-	5	4	2	6	3	1	4
Infantile diarrhoea.....	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	2	4
Tuberculosis (other than respiratory)....	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	3
Violence (other than suicide or traffic).....	3	-	3	4	1	5	1	2	3
Puerperal causes.....	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	2	2
Syphilis.....	-	-	-	2	1	3	1	1	2
Suicide.....	1	1	2	-	-	-	1	-	1
Road traffic accidents.....	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	-	1
Pneumonia (all forms).....	4	2	6	4	2	6	1	-	1
Other circulatory diseases....	5	2	7	-	1	1	1	-	1
Peptic ulcer.....	2	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	1
Appendicitis.....	2	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1
Influenza.....	1	-	1	2	1	3	1	-	1
Anthrax.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Other respiratory diseases....	4	-	4	2	-	2	-	-	-
Diphtheria.....	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whooping cough.....	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-
Other infectious diseases....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other causes.....	6	14	20	11	17	28	9	10	19
Total (all causes).....	80	62	142	88	86	174	87	73	160

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Sanitary Inspector:-

Mr. Fred. Boustead Ashbridge,
Cert. S.I.B., M.R.San.I., M.S.I.H.

I am indebted to Mr. Ashbridge for providing the following information upon the sanitary circumstances of the area.

Water Supply

The Leicester City Corporation's Mains convey an adequate supply of wholesome water throughout the district, with the exception of a part of the parish of East Wigston which is of a rural character. 14 houses obtain water from private wells, 56 obtain it from communal taps or from standpipes outside the houses, and of these 56 approximately one half are scheduled for demolition. The remainder of the 4,200 occupied houses have piped supplies laid into the houses. One well was closed during the year, and a piped supply into the house was substituted for it. Three wells were cleansed.

Drainage and Sewage.

There have been no changes of importance during the year.

The provision of three new trunk sewers and of a new plant for the main pumping station of the sewage works is at present under consideration.

Three new cesspools, serving seven houses, have been constructed at Kilby Bridge. The position of these new pools is such that they may easily be abolished when the council's sewers are extended to Kilby Bridge.

On December 31st/44 there were 27 cesspools in the district.

Closet accomodation.

The total numbers in the district on Dec. 31st/44 were:-

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|------|
| (a) | Privies..... | Nil. |
| (b) | Pail closets..... | 21 |
| (c) | Water closets..... (approx). | 4792 |

Three pail closets serving seven houses were converted to the water carriage system during the year.

Public Cleansing and Salvage.

An efficient service continues to be maintained. Kitchen waste is collected twice a week; other salvage and refuse is collected once a fortnight.

The salvage comprises waste paper, household bones, textiles, kitchen waste, and the quantities collected compare favourably with other authorities of a similar population. The collection of rubber and light metal has now ceased owing to the diminution in the demand.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Total number of	complaints received during the year.....	224
"	" defects or nuisances discovered.....	426
"	" inspections.....	948
"	" (re-visits).....	2,561
"	" preliminary notices served (Housing.....	28
	(Other.....	255
"	" " complied with (Housing.....	25
	(Other.....	241
"	" notices outstanding on Dec 31st/44. (Housing.....	8
	(Other.....	28
"	" statutory notices served.....	7
"	" " complied with.....	7

No summary action has been taken during the year.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

Total number of dwelling houses found infested	(Council.....)	Nil
	(Other.....)	17
" " " " " disinfectd.....		16

Inspection of Dwelling Houses.

1. (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts.).....	460
(b) Number of inspections made for this purpose.....	1,212
2. Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidation Regulations 1925 and 1932	Nil
3. No. of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.....	Nil
4. No. of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local authority or its officers.....	56
5. No. of defective dwelling houses in respect of which action was taken under statutory powers.....	Nil
6. No. of cases of overcrowding reported during the year.....	19
7. (a) No. of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year.....	5
(b) No. of persons concerned in such cases.....	49

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

<u>Milk. Retailers:-</u> (other than cow-keepers). No. on register.....	68
	No. of inspections of premises 52
	No. of contraventions found...Nil

<u>Producers:-</u> (including those who retail milk.)	No. on register.....	18
	No. of inspections made.....	72
	No. of contraventions found...	5
	No. of " remedied...	5

Approximately 70% of the milk retailed in the area is pasteurised.

Milk Sampling.

<u>Designated Milk.</u> (Pasteurised)	Total number of samples taken for bacteriological examination.....	46
	(43 samples Group 1. 3 samples Group 2. No samples were reported as Groups 3 or 4.)	

<u>Ordinary Milk.</u>	Total number of samples taken for bacteriological examination.....	135
	Number of samples satisfactory.....	129
	(115 samples Group 1. 14 samples Group 2)	
	Number of samples unsatisfactory.....	6
	(1 sample Group 1. 5 samples Group 4.)	

Investigations are made when any samples are found below Group 2, and repeat samples are taken.

Meat and Other Foods.

There are no regional slaughter houses in the area.

42 pigs have been slaughtered in the district during the year.

All the carcasses were inspected. In 7 cases a part or an organ of the carcass was condemned.

<u>No. of Inspections.</u>	Knackers' Yards.....	26
	Meat stalls.....	Nil
	Meat shops and stores.....	24
	Places where food other than meat is kept or prepared for sale.....	25

LABORATORY REPORT.

The following examinations were carried out in the County Laboratory:-

Milk examinations (Bacteriological).....	210
(Phosphate test.).....	57
Sputa for tuberculosis.....	73
Swabs for diphtheria.....	15
Urine, general and bacteriological.....	10
Urine for tuberculosis.....	7
Sewage and water analysis.....	1
Miscellaneous.....	8
Total.....	381

In addition a number of specimens were examined for the dysentery and food poisoning organisms by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service.

RAINFALL IN 1944.

At WIGSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL SEWAGE FARM, COUNTSTHORPE.

In the County of LEICESTER.

Rain Gauge	Diameter for Funnel.....	8 inches.
	Height of Top above Ground.....	9 inches.
	Height of Ground above Sea Level.....	256.85.feet.

Month.	Total Depth.	Greatest Fall in 24 hours.		Number of days with .01 inch .04 inch or more. or more.	
	Inches.	Inches.	Date.		
Jan.	2.29	.64	23	19	11
Feb.	1.20	.35	16	18	6
Mar.	.23	.05	21	11	2
Apl.	1.95	.49	4	11	10
May	.94	.36	17	8	6
Jun.	2.35	.65	29	17	12
Jly.	2.63	.81	4	14	12
Aug.	2.84	.61	9	14	9
Sep.	3.03	.59	24	16	12
Oct.	2.56	.45	20	23	15
Nov.	3.30	.47	17	24	18
Dec.	1.32	.35	17	14	9
Total	24.63			189	122

PREVENTION OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

On the 1st. January 1944 the Registrar General introduced a revised system of recording statistics of infectious diseases. Previously the records were based upon the primary notifications made to the Medical Officer of Health by medical practitioners, and which were summarised in the weekly reports of the Medical Officer of Health to the Registrar General. Since January 1st, 1944, additional reports have been submitted to the Registrar General at the end of each quarter, in which an opportunity is given for the correction and alteration of diagnoses, the deletion of cases where the diagnosis was not confirmed, and the inclusion of un-notified cases. With diseases such as diphtheria and cerebro-spinal fever, where admission to an isolation hospital is an almost invariable rule, the margin of error under the revised system will be a small one. Errors, sometimes of considerable size may still occur in the case of such diseases as whooping cough, measles and scarlet fever, which may be treated at home, and where a medical practitioner is either not called in or where he omits to notify a case.

General review.

Throughout the year infectious disease has maintained a low incidence. There have been no deaths from any of the commoner infectious diseases of childhood. A very mild form of scarlet fever is prevalent, and an increasing proportion of cases are treated at home. Although the name of this disease still continues to be regarded with dread by a considerable number of people, at the present time the severity and infectivity of the condition is no greater than that of many cases of measles or influenza.

One death from anthrax occurred during the year. The patient, a male aged 67, worked in a tanner's yard, and in the course of his work handled hides imported from abroad. The diagnosis was not confirmed, and consequently not notified until after his death.

Diphtheria.

Although 12 cases were admitted to hospital either as diphtheria or suspected diphtheria, the diagnosis was confirmed only in four cases, three of which were in children of school age. Despite the fact that only a very small proportion of the children in the area are now un-immunised, three of the four cases occurred in un-immunised children.

Every effort continues to be made to get every child over 12 months of age protected against this disease, and on December 31st, 1944, it was estimated that 93% of the children of school age (over 5 and under 15) and 55% of the children under school age had been immunised. A monthly immunising clinic is held at the County Offices, Leicester, and additional clinics are arranged periodically in both Wigston Magna and South Wigston. Approximately 80% of the immunised children were treated under the local authority's scheme.

Tuberculosis.

15 new cases of respiratory and 1 of non-respiratory tuberculosis were notified during the year. There were 4 deaths from respiratory and 3 from the non-respiratory forms of this disease. The numbers represent a slight increase as compared with the previous year and with the five war years.

TABLE SHOWING CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.	Under 1 yr	1-	3-	5-	10-	15-	25-	35-	45-	65-	Unknown age.	Total	Cases admitted to hospital	Deaths.
Scarlet fever	-	3	3	17	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	27	16	-
Measles	-	4	7	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	16.	-	-
Whooping cough	-	4	7	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	1	-
Diphtheria	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	12	-
Puerperal pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	2	-
Dysentery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Acute pneumonia	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-
Encephalitis lethargica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cerebro spinal fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Pemphigus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Anthrax	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	1

The "Cases admitted to hospital" include cases where the diagnosis was not subsequently confirmed.

Table showing particulars of new cases and deaths from tuberculosis.

Age Groups.	New Cases.						Deaths			
	Respiratory			Non-Respiratory			Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.		M.	F.		M	F	M	F
0-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
5-	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-	1	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
25-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
35-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65-	-	-	-	-	1 (Lupus)	-	1	-	-	-
Total	5	10	-	-	1	-	3	1	1	2

Evacuation.

At the beginning of 1944 the number of evacuees had fallen to 91 billeted in private households, and 204 accommodated in requisitioned houses. In addition there were a considerable number of people (approximately 300) who were originally evacuated to this area and who later became classified as residents, and were responsible for their own arrangements.

The attacks on London by flying and rocket bombs produced a further mass evacuation, and the number of evacuees billeted in the area rose to a peak of 995 during the month of July.

On December 31st, 1944, the following were the numbers of official evacuees resident in the district:-

Unaccompanied children billeted.....	85
Accompanied " "	189
Adults billeted.....	265
Evacuees in requisitioned houses.....	225
Total	764

The above figures give little indication of the difficult and complex problems which arose during the year. Many hundreds of unofficial evacuees arrived in the Wigston district seeking accommodation. Most of them found shelter with friends or acquaintances previously evacuated, and during the months of July and August it was no uncommon thing to find as many as 19 and 20 people resident in five roomed houses. As fast as one problem of accommodation was solved, other cases arose. Under the circumstances Wigston must consider itself fortunate that the peak of the evacuation period arrived during the summer months, and that the episode passed without any serious deterioration in the health of the population.

